

AMENDMENTS

In the Specification:

Page 1, line 2, insert the following heading:

FIELD AND BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Page 1, line 23, insert the following heading:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Page 1, line 24, to page 2, line 7, amend the paragraph as follows:

This shortcoming is remedied by the features of the invention as ~~set out in Claim 1~~ forth in this application. According to this, the securing plate is a separate part which is unconnected to the cover plate. Consequently, the securing plate, independently of the position of the cover plate, can assume the attitude corresponding to the position and shape of the ventral surface of the vertebral body. In this way, an optimal fastening of the securing plate on the vertebral body is possible. It protrudes with a limit stop part in front of the intervertebral space and thereby ensures that the associated cover plate cannot escape in the ventral direction. Therefore, the securing function of the securing plate is not impaired by the fact that it is separate from the cover plate. However, it is unable to prevent the cover plate from shifting in the dorsal direction. The invention is therefore preferably intended for those cover plates which are equipped with suitable means for preventing this dorsal movement. Cover plates provided with a dorsally facing limit stop surface (WO-A-03 075 804) are therefore especially suitable.

Page 3, line 27, insert the following heading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Page 4, line 1, insert the following heading:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Replace the Abstract with the Abstract attached in the Appendix.